

Get Set

Part 2 - The Practice of Prayer

Introduction

Philippians 4:9 *The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

Practice - to perform repeatedly - keep on doing and improving on it. It gets better and better until it becomes second nature- a habit.

More guilt generated than any other topic.

Situation:

100% man Partnership - Prayer (man + God) 100% God
not much prayer *even the atheist prays!*

Develop a Routine for Prayer

Duration

- + New Zealand pastors average 30 minutes a day in prayer
- + Japanese pastors average 44 minutes a day
- + Korean pastors average 90 minutes a day.

Highest frustration of a pastor is the gap between the prayer life that pastors know they need and desire but cannot seem to make it happen.

Heroes of prayer life

- + John Wesley. Every morning at 4am for two hours.
- + Martin Luther. *"I have so much to do today. I spend the first three hours in prayer, or the devil will get the victory."*
- + Adoniram Judson. Prayed seven times a day.

Richard Foster speaks for most of us. *"Many of us are discouraged rather than challenged by such examples."*

Key is to set a reasonable and realistic goal even when you are full of enthusiasm - 5, 10, 15 minutes or more per day.

Location

- + Jesus chose places that are free of distraction - Mark 1
- + In the gospels, Jesus is found mostly praying outdoors in places of beauty
- + In Matthew 6:6, Jesus taught His disciples to go to a prayer closet.

Any space that you won't be interrupted and works best for you.

When Do We Pray?

- + Early in the morning - the larks - Mark 1:35, ... *very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place...*
- + At night - the owls - Luke 6:12, *Jesus went out to the mountainside ... spent the night praying to God...*

The best time to pray is *when you are at your best*.

Praying The Prayer

Jesus only taught one prayer.

In the Upper Room waiting for the Holy Spirit to come.

Acts 1:13-14, When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Again it was used after the Holy Spirit has come.

Acts 2:42, They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Jesus taught it in Matthew as part of His Sermon on the Mount. In Luke it came as the disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. It's a pattern of prayer.

The Prayer

*Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.*

Four great themes from *The Prayer* we can use for *Our Prayer*:

Our Father - Look Up

Jesus brought the greatest revelation that God in Heaven is our Father.

Romans 8:15, For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

Your father knows everything about you - all your weakness, failures, needs etc and still loves you deeply.

Abba Father - daddy brings all of the facets of God!

Your Kingdom Come - Look Down

Pray God's kingdom to come into our broken and troubled world.

Revelation 11:15, Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

At this messy time - when asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God will come, Jesus taught that His kingdom is within you in Luke 17:20-21.

Pray for what is happening up there to happen down here - let earth reflect what is happening in heaven.

What is His kingdom?

Romans 14:17, for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

In the Gospels the kingdom is characterised by the supernatural power over demons and diseases.

Give Us Our Daily Bread - Look In

Daily bread is not just our daily sustenance but more - it's something given supernaturally and continues to replenish us - does not run out.

Gives you each morning: Peace, Presence, Assurance, Purpose, Confidence.

Our God is the God of the overflowing - the abundance. Daddy knows - provides abundantly - no need to beg.

Forgive us Our Debts - Look Around

Debts - our sins and wrong doings.

It's our legal standing. Jesus died - we are set free.

1 John 2:12, I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

Evidence that you have received His forgiveness is you forgive others.

Romans 5:1, Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.